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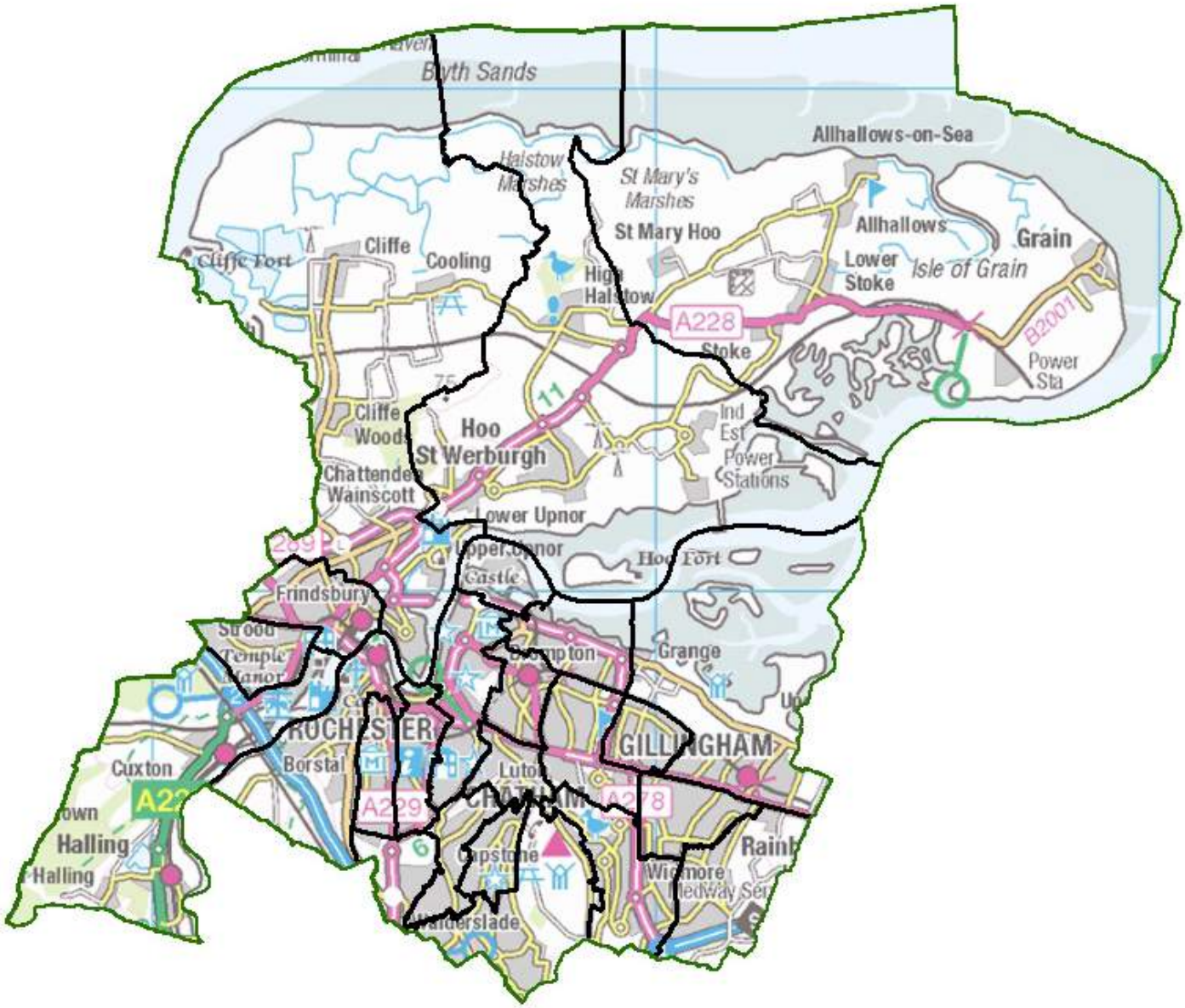
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England




# New electoral arrangements for Medway Council

## Final Recommendations

March 2021

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## A note on our mapping:

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

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# Introduction

## Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament.[1] We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE
- (Deputy Chair)
- Susan Johnson OBE
- Peter Maddison QPM
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Jolyon Jackson CBE (Chief Executive)

## What is an electoral review?

3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed.
- How many wards or electoral divisions there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division.

4 When carrying out an electoral review the Commission has three main considerations:

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

5 Our task is to strike the best balance between these three considerations when making our recommendations.

[1] Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

6 More detail regarding the powers that we have, as well as the further guidance and information about electoral reviews and review process in general, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

## Why Medway?

7 We are conducting a review of Medway Council ('the Council') as the value of each vote in borough council elections varies depending on where you live in Medway. Some councillors currently represent many more or fewer voters than others. This is 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where votes are as equal as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

8 This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Medway are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the borough.

## Our proposals for Medway

9 Medway should be represented by 59 councillors, four more than there are now.

10 Medway should have 24 wards, two more than there are now.

11 The boundaries of all wards should change; none will stay the same.

12 We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for Medway.

## How will the recommendations affect you?

13 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward, and, in some cases, which parish council ward you vote in. Your ward name may also change.

14 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the borough or result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. The recommendations will not have an effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums and we are not able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

## Review timetable

15 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Medway. We then held three periods of consultation with the public on warding patterns for the borough. The submissions received during consultation have informed our final recommendations.

16 The review was conducted as follows:

| Stage starts | Description |
|---|---|
| 19 November 2019 | Number of councillors decided |
| 17 December 2019 | Start of consultation seeking views on new wards |
| 9 March 2020 | End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations |
| 30 June 2020 | Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation |
| 7 September 2020 | End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations |
| 1 December 2020 | Publication of further draft recommendations; start of limited consultation |
| 11 January 2021 | End of limited consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations |
| 2 March 2021 | Publication of final recommendations |

# Analysis and final recommendations

17 Legislation[2] states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors[3] there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

18 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create wards with exactly the same number of electors in each; we have to be flexible. However, we try to keep the number of electors represented by each councillor as close to the average for the council as possible.

19 We work out the average number of electors per councillor for each individual local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown on the table below.

| | 2019 | 2026 |
|---|---|---|
| Electorate of Medway | 200,268 | 219,785 |
| Number of councillors | 55 | 59 |
| Average number of electors per councillor | 3,641 | 3,725 |

20 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All but two of our proposed wards for Medway are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2026.

## Submissions received

21 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

## Electorate figures

22 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2025, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2020. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 10% by 2025.

23 We considered the information provided by the Council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. Due to the Commission's decision to carry out an additional round of consultation and delays

[2] Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
[3] Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

caused by the Covid-19 outbreak, the review will now conclude in 2021. We are content that these figures remain a reasonable forecast of local electors in 2026 and have therefore used them as the basis of our final recommendations.

## Number of councillors

24 Medway Council currently has 55 councillors. As part of our final recommendations we are proposing that the Council should have 59 councillors. This figure has been arrived at following a series of decisions which the Commission took in relation to, firstly, how many councillors are needed to enable the Council to carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively, and secondly, how the pattern of wards reflects community identities.

25 We initially looked at evidence provided by the Council and decided that increasing the total number of members by four would ensure that it could carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively. We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 59 councillors.

26 We received two submissions about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on ward patterns. Both opposed the increase in the number of councillors: one on cost grounds and the other argued that a reduction would lead to an improvement in the quality and input of councillors. However, neither submission provided an alternative council size nor any evidence to support their submission. Therefore, we were not persuaded to reduce the number of councillors.

27 In order to adopt locally proposed wards with strong boundaries, based on the evidence we received, we identified in our draft recommendations a pattern of wards that required 60 councillors – one more than we announced at the beginning of the consultation. We were satisfied that this would still ensure that the Council would be able to carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

28 We received two submissions about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on our draft recommendations. These submissions objected to an increase in the number of councillors on cost grounds but did not provide any other evidence. In addition, the Medway Conservatives (‘the Conservatives’), as part of their submission, proposed a different warding pattern in the Rainham, Twydall and Watling area which would be facilitated by a council size of 59.

29 Having listened to the views expressed during the consultation on our draft recommendations we decided to undertake a period of further consultation on a pattern of wards that we considered better reflected our statutory criteria – this once again meant that we changed the total number of councillors and our further draft recommendations were based on a council size of 59.

30 We did not receive any submissions explicitly about the number of councillors in response to our further draft recommendations. Having considered all of the information we received we have adopted a pattern of wards which we consider best meets the statutory criteria. This proposal is based on a council size of 59 and we remain satisfied that 59 councillors will ensure that the Council will be able to carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

## Ward boundaries consultation

31 We received 143 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included four borough-wide proposals from: the Conservatives, Medway Labour & Co-operative Group and parties ('Labour & Co-operatives'), Medway Liberal Democrats ('Liberal Democrats') and a resident. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for ward boundaries in particular areas of the borough.

32 All four borough-wide schemes used the River Medway and the south-western boundary of Frindsbury Extra parish as boundaries within their proposed warding patterns. Three of the schemes provided for a mixed pattern of one-, two- and three-councillor wards for Medway while one proposal implied the creation of two four-councillor wards.

33 In addition to a 59-councillor scheme, the Labour & Co-operatives included the option to increase the representation of their proposed Cuxton & Halling ward, thereby increasing the council size to 60.

34 We noted that with the exception of the resident's scheme, the borough-wide proposals had mostly good electoral equality. We also considered that the Conservatives, and in particular the Labour & Co-operatives, provided evidence relating to community identity, and we based our draft recommendations on a combination of the two proposals.

35 While the Liberal Democrats' scheme may have provided for a good level of electoral equality, we noted that it was not supported by any detailed community evidence. Furthermore, it was based solely on polling districts which are local authority administrative areas and do not necessarily reflect communities.

36 The resident proposed distributing the additional four councillors across four wards with no change to the existing boundaries. This produced poor forecast electoral equality in some wards. Accordingly, we did not base our draft recommendations on these proposals.

37 Given the travel restrictions, and social distancing, arising from the Covid-19 outbreak, there was a detailed, virtual tour of Medway. This helped to clarify issues raised in submissions and assisted in the construction of the proposed boundary recommendations.

38 Our draft recommendations also took into account local evidence that we received, which provided further evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries.

39 Our draft recommendations were for 15 three-councillor wards, six two-councillor wards and three one-councillor wards. We considered that our draft recommendations would provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

## Draft recommendations consultation

40 We received 325 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included borough-wide comments from the Conservatives Labour & Co-operatives and the Liberal Democrats.

41 The Conservatives supported some of our draft recommendation wards but proposed new boundaries for a number of wards. They stated their opposition to single-member wards in the borough with the exception of the parished Peninsula area and proposed a new scheme for a number of wards in the east of the borough. Labour proposed a new scheme for Cuxton, Halling and the south Strood area but otherwise supported the draft recommendations.

42 The Liberal Democrats also expressed support for most of our draft recommendation wards but opposed the draft recommendations in Hoo Peninsula, Cuxton, Halling, parts of Strood, Chatham, Brompton and the St Mary's Island areas of the borough.

43 We also received a submission from the Medway Independents in which they expressed their opposition to the creation of single-member wards.

44 The majority of the other submissions, including from councillors, local organisations, parish and town councils and residents, focused on specific areas, particularly our proposals in Chatham, Cuxton, Halling, Hempstead, Rainham, St Mary's Island, Strood, Twydall and Wigmore.

## Further draft recommendations

45 In response to our draft recommendations, we received a large number of objections from residents in the east of our proposed Twydall ward (which is the same as the existing ward) who described their community as being part of Rainham. The Conservatives also proposed that this area be moved into a Rainham ward. We received some evidence from the Wigmore community who considered that the area was being split across two wards. Accordingly, we were persuaded to amend our proposals and we published further draft recommendations in the east of the borough.

46 Our further draft recommendations included six wards based on a scheme proposed by the Conservatives to address these issues.

47 In response to this consultation we received 133 submissions, including area-wide comments from the three political parties referred to above, two Members of Parliament (MPs), councillors and a resident. The Conservatives and MPs supported our further draft recommendations in full. Labour & Co-operatives supported three of the further draft recommendation wards but proposed a different scheme for the other three wards. The Liberal Democrats were of the view that our original draft recommendations would better serve the 'communities of Gillingham and Rainham'.

48 Councillors Fearn, Hackwell, Jarrett and the councillors representing the existing Rainham Central and Rainham North wards all supported our further draft recommendations. Councillor Maple wrote in support of the Labour & Co-operatives proposals. Councillors Browne, Johnson, Lloyd, Prenter and Stamp expressed their objections to some of our latest recommendations. The resident's area-wide comments supported our further draft recommendations.

49 The majority of the other submissions were from residents of the Darland area and the existing Watling ward who objected to Darland being excluded from Watling ward. We also received a significant number of submissions on our proposals for Rainham North and Twydall wards. The remaining submissions were from Wigmore residents who described their community as being with Hempstead.

## Final recommendations

50 Our final recommendations are for 14 three-councillor wards, seven two-councillor wards and three one-councillor wards. Our final recommendations are based on our further draft recommendations for Rainham North, Rainham South East and Twydall wards and on our draft recommendations for the rest of the borough with modifications to the wards in Cuxton, Halling, Hempstead, Rainham South West, Strood, Watling and Wigmore based on the submissions received. In particular, our final recommendations for Rainham South West, Hempstead &

Wigmore and Watling wards are based on the Labour & Co-operatives' latest proposals, where we were persuaded to make the changes for community identity reasons. We have also made two minor modifications to the boundaries between Princes Park and Lordswood & Walderslade wards to improve access for some residents and to unite others in a single ward.

51 We consider that our final recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

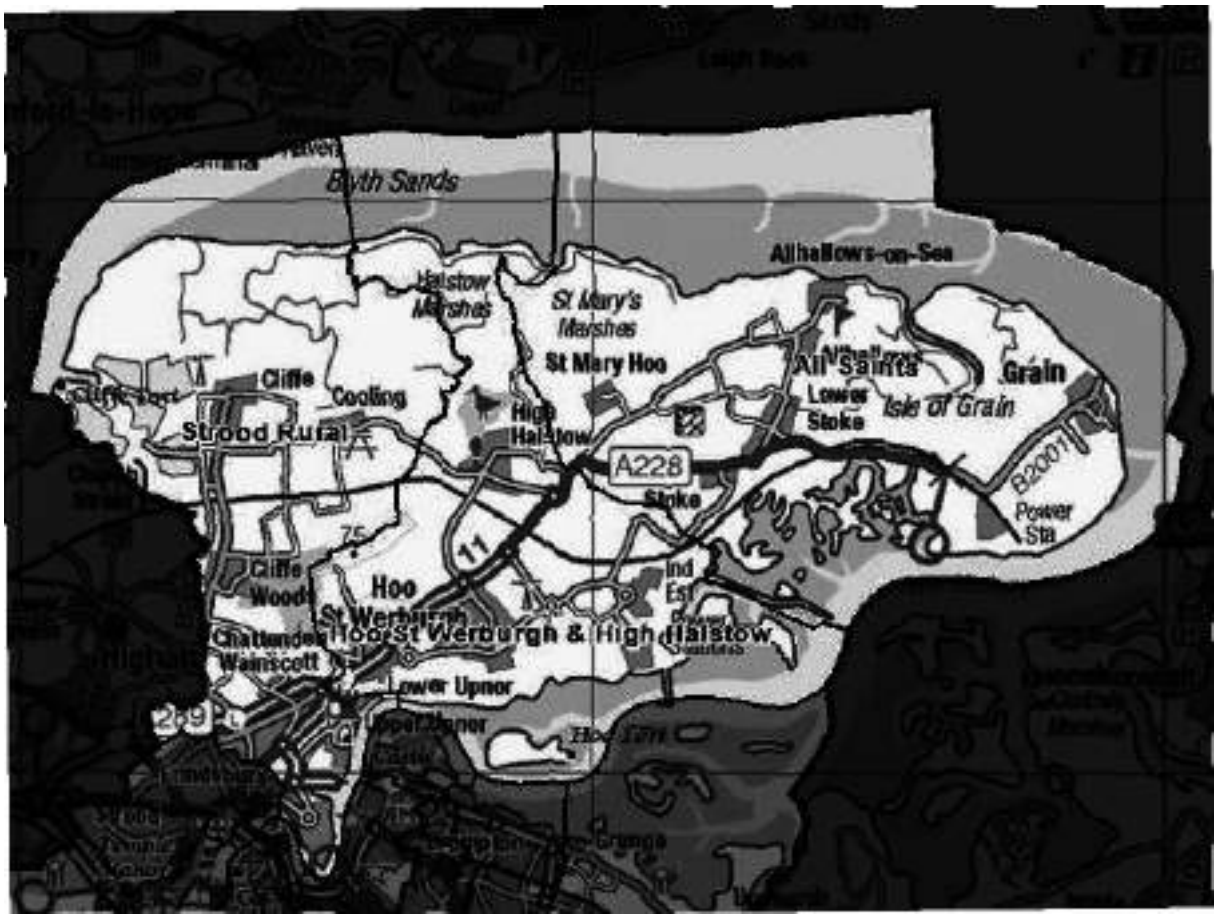
52 The tables and maps on pages 11–35 detail our final recommendations for each area of Medway. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory[4] criteria of:

- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

53 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 43 and on the large map accompanying this report.

[4] Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## All Saints, Hoo St Werburgh & High Halstow and Strood Rural




| Ward | Number of councillors | Variance 2026 |
|---|---|---|
| All Saints | 1 | 7% |
| Hoo St Werburgh & High Halstow | 3 | 1% |
| Strood Rural | 3 | 1% |

*All Saints, Hoo St Werburgh & High Halstow and Strood Rural*

54 We received submissions about this area in response to our draft recommendations from the Conservatives, the Labour & Co-operatives, the Liberal Democrats, Hoo St Werburgh Parish Council and a number of residents. With the exception of the Liberal Democrats, the boundaries of our draft recommendations received support from respondents.

55 The Conservatives expressed their support but proposed a minor amendment which involved moving a single property from All Saints ward to Hoo St Werburgh & High Halstow ward. While we understand the reasons for this, we note that this would involve a change in parish boundaries. In their submission, the Conservatives state that 'the LGBCE has the jurisdiction to amend parish boundaries' when setting new principal authorities' boundaries. What this means is that we are able to amend parish boundaries when determining the *external* boundaries of a principal authority

– as part of a Principal Area Boundary Review or the setting up of new authorities. We are unable to amend parish boundaries as part of an Electoral Review. Medway Borough Council can undertake a Community Governance Review to consider parish boundaries.

56 The Labour & Co-operatives supported our draft recommendations for this area in full, noting that recommendations were constrained by existing parish boundaries and that representation had increased and the electoral equality was 'good'. The Liberal Democrats put forward arguments in support of their original proposals submitted during the first consultation. They argued that 'High Halstow has more community association with the other villages and hamlets along the north coast of Hoo Peninsula'. Nevertheless, we note that our recommendations avoid dividing Hoo parish between borough wards and has wide support.

57 Hoo St Werburgh Parish Council was supportive of our inclusion of the entire parish in a single ward. However, it expressed disappointment that across the Hoo Peninsula, the number of councillors increased by just one (i.e. from six to seven). Representation is based on number of electors and not geographical size, hence the modest increase in councillor numbers in this area.

58 Two residents queried the name of our draft recommendations All Saints ward. One felt that it was misleading as 'most [residents] would typically associate the name All Saints with the Magpie Hall Road area over in Chatham' and appeared to suggest that the Isle of Grain be included in the ward name. The other resident suggested it be called All Hallows and Grain. We note that our All Saints ward includes four parishes: Allhallows, Isle of Grain, St Mary Hoo and Stoke. We consider that it will be inappropriate to name it after any one or two parishes without receiving evidence of overwhelming community agreement. All Saints is a name which was locally generated by the Conservatives whose proposals we adopted in this area at the previous consultation, and we are content with this name.

59 A further two residents supported our All Saints ward in full. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for All Saints, Hoo St Werburgh & High Halstow and Strood Rural wards as final.

## Cuxton, Halling & Riverside, Strood West and Strood North & Frindsbury

| Ward | Number of councillors | Variance 2026 |
|---|---|---|
| Cuxton, Halling & Riverside | 2 | -12% |
| Strood North & Frindsbury | 3 | 1% |
| Strood West | 3 | -1% |

### *Cuxton, Halling & Riverside*

60 We received over 65 submissions in response to our draft recommendations for a three-councillor Halling, Cuxton & Strood Riverside ward, including from the Conservatives, the Labour & Co-operatives, the Liberal Democrats, councillors, Cuxton Parish Council and residents. As part of our draft recommendations, we

specifically asked for alternative proposals for this area, recognising the geographical limitations and strength of feeling in the community.

61 The Conservatives and a number of councillors supported our draft recommendations. They acknowledged the good electoral equality of the ward and point to the good connectivity between the parishes of Cuxton and Halling and urban Strood. Furthermore, they explained that a significant number of pupils resident in this southern part of Strood were likely to attend the Academy of Cuxton Schools.

62 The Labour & Co-operatives, Cuxton Parish Council and many residents proposed a two-member ward which included discrete areas of the existing Strood South ward but did not go as far north and west in Strood as we proposed in our draft recommendations. The proposals were to include residents of either one or both of the Medway Gate and Temple Wharf communities located immediately south of the M2 motorway in a ward with the rural parishes.

63 The Labour & Co-operatives stated that these two communities are separated from 'Strood proper' by the A228 and train line. Cuxton Parish Council explained that 40% of children attending Cuxton Academy of Schools resided in Medway Gate. With regards to Temple Wharf they explained that residents used the leisure facilities in Medway Valley Leisure Park as did Cuxton residents and that given the location of the new development in this area, it was likely that some children will also attend the Academy of Cuxton Schools.

64 The Liberal Democrats argued for Cuxton and Halling parishes to form a two-member ward on their own even if that meant being overrepresented. Some residents agreed with this, pointing to the differences between the rural parishes and urban Strood and expressing concerns that councillors will be torn between the different needs of both communities. However, as pointed out in our draft recommendations report, a two-councillor ward with a forecast variance (taking account of developments by 2026) of -27% is too high to justify.

65 We have considered the evidence submitted to us and have been persuaded to revise our recommendations and create a two-member ward which includes Cuxton and Halling parishes and the communities in Medway Gate and Temple Wharf that are in Strood. Its northernmost boundary will run along Priory Road to River Medway. We consider that this ward, which is forecast to have 12% fewer electors than the average for the borough, reflects a good balance of our statutory criteria.

66 We have been persuaded that the communities of Medway Gate and Temple Wharf share some community facilities and common interests with the parishes south of the M2. We consider that in order to provide an acceptable level of electoral equality in this area we must include a part of Strood with Cuxton and Halling

parishes and we believe that including this area represents the best balance of our statutory criteria.

67 The Labour & Co-operatives proposed naming this ward Cuxton, Halling & Temple ward because they state that this area north of the M2 is well known as Temple Marsh. Cuxton Parish Council suggested it be called Cuxton, Halling & Riverside. We consider that the name Cuxton, Halling & Riverside reflects the composition of this proposed ward and are including it as part of our final recommendations.

*Strood North & Frindsbury and Strood West*

68 We have based our wards in this area on our draft recommendations with modifications to reflect the changes resulting in our proposed Cuxton, Halling & Riverside ward.

69 While the Conservatives supported our draft recommendations, the Labour & Co-operatives proposed three wards in this area, creating a new single-councillor Earl ward in addition to a two-councillor Strood West and three-councillor Strood & Frindsbury ward. They explained that their proposed Earl ward was based around the Earl Estate and encompassed a discrete community. This proposal also placed the area north of Priory Road into Strood North ward thereby uniting the High Street in a single ward.

70 The Liberal Democrats' proposed Strood South ward at the previous stage had a lot of similarities to our draft recommendations Strood West ward and they expressed support for our proposed ward. In addition, they proposed a Strood Riverside ward which included the Medway Gate and Temple Wharf communities, areas that now form part of our Cuxton, Halling & Riverside ward.

71 Councillor Hubbard considered that our draft recommendations split a long-established community around Beech, Cedar and Hawthorn roads and that Darnley Road was a natural barrier. Three residents also stated that our draft recommendations split several roads, including Cedar and Darnley roads, in an unsatisfactory manner.

72 After considering the evidence and our revised boundary for Cuxton, Halling & Riverside ward, we are uniting the above-mentioned roads in Strood West ward and including the area north of Priory Road in Strood North ward. However, we have not received persuasive community evidence in support of the creation of an Earl ward and our final recommendations do not include this ward.

73 Councillor Hubbard proposed renaming Strood North as Strood North & Frindsbury stating that the residents of Frindsbury define themselves as a separate community to Strood. Although the Labour & Co-operatives did not mention it in the

detail of their submission, we note that the maps showing their proposals include this name for this ward. We are therefore content to rename this ward accordingly to reflect the constituent communities.

74 Our final recommendations are for a three-councillor Strood North & Frindsbury ward forecast to have 1% more electors than the borough average by 2026. Strood West ward will be a three-councillor ward forecast to have 1% fewer electors by 2026.

## Rainham North and Twydall

| Ward | Number of councillors | Variance 2026 |
|---|---|---|
| Rainham North | 3 | 5% |
| Twydall | 2 | 5% |

### *Rainham North and Twydall*

75 As set out in the further draft recommendations, we gave careful consideration to the evidence received during the consultation on our original draft recommendations. On the balance of the evidence we received, we proposed a three-councillor Rainham North ward and a two-councillor Twydall ward as part of our further draft recommendations.

76 In addition to the area-wide comments, we received approximately 30 submissions for this area. The Conservatives supported our further draft recommendations and were of the view that geographical and community cohesion was better achieved by the enlarged Rainham North ward. They also stated that the revised Twydall ward more accurately reflected the distinct nature of Gillingham.

77 Labour & Co-operatives were of the view that the original draft recommendations were better but acknowledged the community response to them and accepted the proposals as set out. They also noted that one benefit of the further draft recommendations was the use of the A289 (Ito Way and Yokosuka Way) as a clear boundary for both Watling and Twydall wards.

78 The Liberal Democrats acknowledged that the community around Bloors Lane and Hawthorne Avenue identify as being part of the Rainham Community but were of the view that the practicalities of the location and the roads that connected residents of this area to other areas meant that residents would gravitate towards Twydall for their everyday necessities. They also argued that the further draft recommendations alter the makeup of Rainham North ward from one with largely spread out rural communities to one which now included 'densely populated streets' which will have different issues and 'draw attention away from the rural communities'.

79 To address the issue with residents in the east of the existing Twydall ward identifying with Rainham, they suggested adopting our original draft recommendations Twydall ward and renaming it Twydall & Rainham Mark ward.

80 The current Rainham North councillors, Councillor Fearn and Councillor Jarrett supported our further draft recommendations on community identity grounds, arguing that the proposed Rainham North ward included all the residents north of the A2 who identified with Rainham as their community in a Rainham ward. They also maintained that both the proposed Rainham North and Twydall wards have strong boundaries. Councillor Fearn stated that the proposed Twydall ward maintained 'the integrity of the recognised area of Twydall and Twydall alone'.

81 Councillors Browne, Lloyd and Prenter opposed our proposals for these two wards. Councillor Browne was of the opinion that the objections to our draft recommendations were from residents who had been misinformed and who thought their addresses would change. Councillor Lloyd expressed concern that when completed, the new housing developments in the existing Rainham North ward would affect the electoral equality of the ward and suggested that any changes be delayed until these developments were completed. Councillor Prenter pointed out that the 2011 Census identifies Twydall as an area of deprivation. He was therefore of the view that making it a two-councillor ward was 'lowering the representation' and 'the equality of opportunity' for residents of the ward.

82 The majority of the submissions we received from residents supported our proposed Rainham North ward for community identity reasons. However, a few residents objected to the proposals for Twydall, arguing for a three-councillor ward.

83 We have considered all the evidence presented and consider that the number of councillors representing Twydall ward is proportionate to the forecast electorate for that area. We also consider that residents who wrote in at the last stage provided evidence of their community identity being in Rainham, notwithstanding any confusion about postcodes and addresses which will not be affected as a result of our recommendations. There appears to be a consensus that these residents do identify as living in Rainham. Therefore, we are content that our proposed Rainham North and Twydall wards represent the best balance of our criteria.

84 We therefore confirm our further draft recommendations for Rainham North and Twydall wards as final.

## Chatham Central & Brompton, Gillingham, Luton and St Mary's Island

| Ward | Number of councillors | Variance 2026 |
|---|---|---|
| Chatham Central & Brompton | 3 | 0% |
| Gillingham North | 3 | 0% |
| Gillingham South | 3 | 7% |
| Luton | 2 | 0% |
| St Mary's Island | 1 | -2% |

### *Chatham Central & Brompton and St Mary's Island*

85 In addition to the borough-wide comments, we received submissions from an MP, councillors, local organisations and residents in response to our draft recommendations.

86 The Conservatives stated their objections to single-councillor wards except in areas that are parished. The Liberal Democrats objected to our inclusion of a single-councillor St Mary's Island ward in the middle of three-councillor wards. The Conservatives submitted different proposals for this area and for the area covered by our draft recommendations Fort Horsted and Intra wards. They argued that the area managed by the Chatham Maritime Trust ought to be contained in a single ward and that the Chatham Waters development should not be included in a Gillingham ward. Furthermore, they argued for Rochester High Street (distinguished from Chatham High Street by its ME1 postcode) to be included in a single ward. The Conservatives proposed a boundary which split Gundulph Road based on postcode.

87 Kelly Tolhurst MP and Councillor Tejan each wrote in support of the Conservatives' proposals and put forward similar arguments around single-councillor wards, the placement of the Chatham Waters development and that Rochester High Street and Chatham High Street should each be in a single ward.

88 Several residents expressed support for the Conservatives' proposals stating that it was inappropriate to place Chatham Historic Dockyard and Brompton, Chatham Waters development and St Mary's Island in separate wards. One resident also stressed that St Mary's Island was part of Chatham.

89 The Labour & Co-operatives expressed support for our draft recommendations for these wards. With regards to our draft recommendations St Mary's Island ward, they highlighted its local facilities including a school, doctor's surgery, community centre and active residents' association which unite this community. They argued that there was no natural connection between the Old Brompton community and the St Mary's Island community. During the first consultation, they stated that the boundaries of what became our draft recommendations Chatham & Old Brompton ward unifies an area that is 'unambiguously regarded as Chatham by those who live there'.

90 Councillor Maple supported our draft recommendations for these wards as well as our Intra ward to the south-west. He pointed to the strength of identity of the St Mary's Island community and that Chatham Maritime Trust had specific responsibilities for this community.

91 The Chief Executive of the Chatham Maritime Trust also stated his agreement with the proposals for a single-councillor St Mary's Island ward.

92 Residents who supported the creation of a single-councillor ward for St Mary's Island stated that they were a distinct community with their own needs. One resident said that they had different requirements to Chatham and Rochester while another expressed support for the exclusion of the Chatham Waters development due to the latter's access being from the south-east.

93 We have considered the arguments in support of and against our draft recommendations and note that the Conservatives' proposals have merit. However, with regards to Rochester High Street and their proposed boundary, including along Gundulph Road, we note that this is a built-up area with no easily discernible markers for a strong boundary. We consider that the railway bridge used by our draft recommendations is a stronger and more identifiable boundary in this area. A resident in commenting on wards in the area concluded that we had 'broadly got it right' and described the middle section of Chatham and Rochester high streets, which we included in our draft recommendations Intra ward, as a 'distinct stretch of high street between the Rochester railway bridge and Sun Pier' that has 'previously been identified as a heritage grant and arts development area in regeneration plans'.

94 With regards to the Chatham Waters development, we note that as a new development the community will likely emerge in common with those living in the new development on the eastern side of Pier Approach Road. However, the Conservatives' proposed boundary along Pier Approach Road places these developments in separate wards. In addition, we also note that some respondents considered that the location of this development is actually deemed part of Gillingham (paragraph 101).

95 We considered the points raised about the Chatham Maritime area and whether this entire area should be in the same ward. While we note that St Mary's Island is part of a much wider Chatham area, we have been persuaded that there is a clear and distinct community for St Mary's Island and we are content to maintain it in a ward by itself as part of our final recommendations. We note that our draft recommendations for this ward had support from a significant number of respondents who commented on this area.

96 With regards to the creation of single-councillor wards, we note the different points of view but do not consider that proposals based on the principle of single-member wards relate to our statutory criteria and we have not been persuaded to amend our proposals to reflect this request.

97 Accordingly, we are confirming our draft recommendations as final with the exception of a ward name. A number of respondents, including the Conservatives, pointed out that our Chatham & Old Brompton ward did not include all of Chatham and that there was no place called Old Brompton. Therefore, we have been

persuaded to rename it Chatham Central & Brompton ward in accordance with a suggestion by the Conservatives.

98 Our three-councillor Chatham Central & Brompton ward is forecast to have the approximately same number of electors as the borough average by 2026 while our single-councillor St Mary's Island ward is forecast to have 2% fewer electors than the borough average by the same year.

### *Gillingham North and Gillingham South*

99 The submissions we received about our draft recommendations in this area were broadly supportive. The Labour & Co-operatives and the Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendations in full. The Conservatives supported our Gillingham South ward in full but noted that their support of Gillingham North ward was dependent on the exclusion of the Chatham Waters development from this ward. As mentioned in paragraph 88, some residents also expressed this view.

100 Councillors Cooper, Khan, Price, Andy Stamp and Chrissy Stamp each wrote in support of the wards. They agreed with the moving of an area of the existing Gillingham South ward into Watling ward and the moving of a few electors on Grange Farm and Lower Rainham Road from Gillingham North ward to Rainham North ward. They also supported the changes we made to the area around the High Street including both sides of the road in Gillingham South ward.

101 Councillor Andy Stamp believed that although named Chatham Waters, the development was actually in Gillingham and stated that its inclusion in Gillingham North ward made 'total sense from both a geographical and community perspective'. Councillor Cooper pointed to the fact that in response to a consultation to name the neighbouring ASDA store, the community overwhelmingly proposed ASDA Gillingham Pier, suggesting that the community considered the Chatham Waters development part of Gillingham.

102 Some residents expressed support for our draft recommendations which moved an area north of Sturdee Avenue from Gillingham South into Watling ward. They were of the view that this area had more in common with Watling ward.

103 We have carefully considered the submissions we received and have not been persuaded to amend the boundary around the Chatham Waters development. As mentioned in paragraph 94, we are of the view that the residents' community will develop with other electors in the nearby developments. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Gillingham North and Gillingham South wards as final. They are both three-councillor wards. Gillingham North ward is forecast to have approximately the same number of electors as the borough average and Gillingham South ward is forecast to have 7% more electors, by 2026.

104 Councillors Cooper, Price and Andy Stamp proposed that we rename Gillingham North ward, Lower Gillingham. They pointed out that ‘the area is known locally by that name’ and that ‘most residents refer to the northern part of Gillingham as Lower Gillingham’. However, we note that doing this would leave the name of Gillingham South without a corresponding ‘north’ ward and we have not been persuaded to rename it.

### *Luton*

105 The borough-wide submissions we received for this area all supported our draft recommendations. In addition, Councillor Maple stated that Luton had its own identity and sense of place. A resident supported Luton no longer being included in a ward with Wayfield.

106 Therefore, we confirm our draft recommendations for Luton as final. Luton ward will be a two-councillor ward forecast to have the same number of electors per councillor as the borough average by 2026.

## Fort Horsted, Fort Pitt and Rochester

| Ward | Number of councillors | Variance 2026 |
|---|---|---|
| Fort Horsted | 1 | -2% |
| Fort Pitt | 3 | -8% |
| Rochester East & Warren Wood | 3 | -9% |
| Rochester West & Borstal | 3 | -11% |

### *Fort Horsted and Fort Pitt*

107 In response to our draft recommendations, the Conservatives objected to the creation of a single-councillor (Fort Horsted) ward and proposed a two-councillor Horsted & Holcombe ward which extended north and included the Holcombe Grammar School site. They stated that their proposed ward included areas from the

existing Rochester South & Horsted ward which related well together. They did not consider that any part of South Rochester had 'an established nexus with the area to the north of Pattens Lane and thereafter northwards to the river' as proposed in our draft recommendations Intra ward.

108 The Labour & Co-operatives and Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendations for these wards. In response to our previous consultation, the Labour & Co-operatives explained that residents of the area within our now draft recommendations Intra ward used the same primary schools at Balfour Road, the same bus routes, health facilities and amenities and that there was a strong north/south connectivity. They went on to explain that the north end of the ward took in the bulk of the Council's heritage funded Intra area whilst recognising the gateway to Rochester Riverside and Doust Way. They stated that Wilson Avenue is more connected to the area north of Pattens Lane.

109 The Liberal Democrats agreed that 'Fort Horsted was a recognisable community with respect to the Davis Estate' and supported the creation of the single-councillor Fort Horsted ward. They also supported our draft recommendations Intra ward stating that although their proposed Town ward did not extend that far north to the river due to their different warding proposals, they noted that it had boundaries that encapsulated what they were trying to achieve. However, they suggested that it be renamed Town as it included parts of both Chatham and Rochester.

110 Councillor Turpin argued against the creation of a single-councillor ward stating that it would lead to 'the isolation of that area with less representation in the Council' and stated a preference for the retention of a three-councillor Rochester South & Horsted ward. A few residents of the existing Rochester South & Horsted ward also expressed support for the existing ward or a two-councillor ward along the lines of the Conservatives' proposals.

111 A resident stated that 'the proposed Intra ward managed to capture the way each adjacent community interlinks all the way to the River' and that this happened 'in a way that the current River Ward fails to do because of the shared amenities such as schools and shops all being within the area sandwiched by Maidstone Road and City Way'.

112 We have considered the evidence submitted to us – both for this area and the areas around Chatham and Brompton. We do not consider that the creation of a single-councillor ward isolates an area. We are content that our Fort Horsted ward is a good balance of our statutory criteria – it has good electoral equality, a strong community identity and has strong boundaries that will facilitate good and effective local government – and have not been persuaded to expand it northwards and adopt the Conservatives' proposal.

113 Another resident asked why we had included the recreation ground, east of Fort Pitt Grammar School, in Rochester West as they felt that it was part of the existing River ward and rightly belonged in Intra ward. However, they did not provide any community evidence to support its inclusion in our draft recommendations Intra ward and we note that others supported our draft recommendations.

114 One resident suggested moving the area around Chatham train station into our draft recommendations Chatham & Old Brompton ward. However, doing this produced a variance of at least -13% for the residual Intra ward and we have not been persuaded to make this amendment.

115 While some residents wrote in support of the name 'Intra' others expressed their objection. Those in support felt that it captured the essence of the ward being made up of an area that was the interface between Chatham and Rochester. One resident stated that it would allow residents of this area to develop an identity of their own. Others suggested renaming it: the Conservatives suggested Fort Pitt while a resident proposed calling it Pitt ward. As noted above, the Liberal Democrats suggested the name 'Town'.

116 We note that some respondents have strong objections to the name 'Intra'. We also note that Fort Pitt Hill, Fort Pitt Grammar School and Fort Pitt Military Cemetery are all included in this ward. We are therefore content to rename it.

117 Accordingly, we are confirming our draft recommendations as final for these two wards with the exception of renaming Intra ward as Ford Pitt.

118 Our final recommendations Fort Pitt ward is a three-councillor ward forecast to have 8% fewer electors than the borough average by 2026. Fort Horsted ward will be a single-councillor ward forecast to have 2% fewer electors by 2026.

*Rochester East & Warren Wood and Rochester West & Borstal*

119 In addition to the borough-wide comments on our draft recommendations for this area, we received submissions from councillors, local organisations and residents.

120 Aside from their proposed modification around Rochester High Street (see paragraph 86), the Conservatives expressed support for our wards in this area. They, however, proposed renaming the wards to better reflect the communities within the ward. The Labour & Co-operatives and Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendations in full, as did the City of Rochester Society.

121 Therefore, in light of the decisions we have made regarding Rochester High Street and the broad support for these wards, we are confirming our draft recommendations for these three-councillor wards as final.

122 The Conservatives proposed renaming these wards to better reflect their constituent communities. A resident stated many residents of Borstal Village objected to dropping ‘Borstal’ from Rochester West’s ward name at the last review. We also note that the Warren Wood area is now part of Rochester East ward. We are therefore content to rename these wards Rochester East & Warren Wood ward and Rochester West & Borstal ward. Rochester East & Warren Wood ward is forecast to have 9% fewer electors than the average for Medway Council by 2026. Rochester West & Borstal ward is forecast to have 11% fewer electors than the borough average by the same year.

## Hempstead & Wigmore, Rainham South and Watling

| Ward | Number of councillors | Variance 2026 |
|---|---|---|
| Hempstead & Wigmore | 2 | 9% |
| Rainham South East | 3 | 2% |
| Rainham South West | 2 | 7% |
| Watling | 3 | -1% |

### *Hempstead & Wigmore, Rainham South West and Watling*

123 Our further draft recommendations for this area were a three-councillor Hempstead, Hale & Darland ward, a two-councillor Watling ward, which excluded the Darland Estate area, and a three-councillor Rainham South West & Wigmore ward.

In response we received more than 80 submissions, in addition to the area-wide comments. Most people who wrote to us opposed our proposals.

124 Firstly, an overwhelming majority of respondents opposed Darland Estate being separated from Watling and considered that it shares very little in common with Hempstead. Secondly, while there was support expressed for uniting the Wigmore community within a single ward, most of those who commented specifically on our Rainham South West & Wigmore ward were of the view that Wigmore ought to be in a ward with Hempstead. Accordingly, we have been persuaded by the community evidence to depart from our further draft recommendations for these three wards.

125 The Conservatives, Rehman Chishti MP, Tracey Crouch MP, Rainham Central ward councillors, councillors Aldous, Fearn, Hackwell and Jarrett, and a handful of residents expressed support for our proposals. The Labour & Co-operatives, the Liberal Democrats, councillors Johnson and Chrissy Stamp, two local businesses and almost all residents objected to the proposals, specifically the exclusion of Darland from Watling ward.

126 The Conservatives supported the Watling ward outlined in our further draft recommendations that did not include Darland, citing the strong boundaries of the A289 (Ito Way) to the west, the A2 to the south and the railway line to the north of the ward. They also noted that Hempstead, Hale & Darland ward had strong boundaries and that the Hempstead Residents' Association had expressed support for the new ward.

127 The Labour & Co-operatives argued that the area of countryside between Darland and Hempstead presented a considerable physical barrier, not only in terms of distance but also elevation, with both areas sitting on top of 'two opposite sides of a valley'. They submitted a revised proposal which united the entire Wigmore community in a single ward with Hempstead while retaining the Darland Estate area in a ward with the community across the A2.

128 The Liberal Democrats stated that the only connection between Darland and Hempstead was a low grade, country road and that Darland residents shared amenities with residents north of the A2.

129 Councillor Fearn stated that linking Darland with Hempstead made 'geographical sense and historically closely mirrors a previous County Council Division'. This point was echoed in the resident's area-wide comments.

130 Similarly, Councillor Jarrett argued that Darland 'had and has no affinity with the area of Gillingham to the north of the A2'. He was of the view that Darland looked towards Hempstead and shared many of the same issues and concerns as Hempstead, including objecting to periodic plans to develop Capstone Valley.

131 Councillor Chrissy Stamp believed that the transport barriers between Darland and Hempstead significantly influences the way residents used local services and amenities. She stated that Darland residents overwhelmingly use GP services, primary schools and shops in Gillingham, whereas Hempstead residents overwhelmingly use GP services and schools in Wigmore and Rainham, and also the shops and amenities at Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre. Councillor Johnson mentioned 'a relatively complex journey' from Darland to Hempstead.

132 The two local businesses (Ability Plus and Strum & Bass Ltd) and most residents made similar arguments. They told us that there were no direct transport links between Darland and Hempstead. For example, one resident highlighted the fact that (vehicular) access to Darland from Hempstead via Star Lane was blocked many years ago. Residents were also of the view that our latest proposals would divide both the residential and business communities on both side of the A2. Darland Estate residents said that they looked to Upper Gillingham, rather than Hempstead, and that the A2 with its shops and businesses was a focus of their community. Ability Plus and a resident explained that Watling Business Association had membership from both sides of the A2. Other residents stated that they used Gillingham Park and the GP surgeries on Malvern and Woodlands roads, all north of the A2.

133 We have considered the evidence carefully and note that those living in Darland have described their community as being focused on and towards the A2 (Watling Street) and the wider Gillingham area; that the transport links with Hempstead are not strong; and that the Capstone Valley is not a strong unifying feature even though both Darland and Hempstead communities do unite to oppose planning applications from time to time. We also note that the amenities regularly used by Darland residents, for example GP surgeries, schools, cafes and other shops are located towards the north and not south in Hempstead.

134 Accordingly, we have included the Darland area immediately south of the A2 in a Watling ward and reinstated the existing (and our draft recommendations) boundary in the south of this ward.

135 The Conservatives supported our Rainham South West & Wigmore ward explaining that it united Wigmore in a single ward and that there was no call from residents of Hempstead to remain aligned to Wigmore. The Labour & Co-operatives acknowledged the desirability of uniting the Wigmore community in a single ward. They also acknowledged that Wigmore was adjacent to Rainham but argued that it was 'clearly a closer relation to Hempstead than Darland is'. They were of the view that Hempstead and Wigmore were 'as much united by Hoath Way (the A278) as divided by it' and stated that there were a number of well-used crossing points.

136 Councillor Aldous pointed to the Rainham & Wigmore Community Association and the shared library as evidence supporting the inclusion of Wigmore in a ward

with Rainham Central and not Hempstead. Councillor Jarrett explained that our further draft recommendations Rainham South West & Wigmore ward would remove the need for two sets of councillors to attend residents' meetings. Councillor Hackwell cited the A278 Hoath Way as a natural boundary between Hempstead and Wigmore communities. The Rainham Central councillors expressed support for our proposed Rainham South West & Wigmore ward – its boundaries and revised name. However, Councillor Johnson proposed the inclusion of Hempstead in a ward with Wigmore and argued that Hoath Way was 'a very porous boundary because the exits from Wigmore towards Hempstead are clearly set up to facilitate those journeys to Hempstead Valley'.

137 Most of the residents who specifically included comments about our proposed Rainham South West & Wigmore ward in their submissions opposed our proposals to include Wigmore in a ward with parts of Rainham and cited their community as being connected to Hempstead, including schools and shops. For example, one resident stated that both Hempstead and Wigmore were served by Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre while Rainham was served by Rainham Shopping Precinct. Another, who identified as a Hempstead resident, stated that while they used some facilities in Wigmore, they considered Darland part of Gillingham and did not use any 'shops, amenities or facilities' there.

138 Having included the Darland Estate area in Watling ward we considered creating a single-councillor Hempstead ward and retaining our further draft recommendations for Rainham South West & Wigmore, but this produced poor forecast electoral variances of 30% more electors than the borough average for Hempstead. Similarly, a two-councillor Hempstead ward produced a forecast variance of 34% fewer electors than the borough average by 2026. We then looked at how we could improve the electoral equality. We noted that by including Hempstead and Wigmore together, we could identify wards with good levels of electoral equality. We note that there are good community links between Hempstead and Wigmore and that they are more likely to share the same facilities and amenities than the Darland community just south of the A2 and Hempstead. Some residents cited facilities like Kings Frith Park, schools, GP surgeries and shops as examples of facilities shared by Hempstead and Wigmore residents.

139 We recognise that Wigmore in some respects also looks to Rainham but we consider that in light of all the evidence we received, including the Wigmore community in a ward with Hempstead is the best balance of our criteria. We are uniting Wigmore in a single ward which responds to many of the views expressed over the course of the last two consultations. While the A278 Hoath Way makes a strong and identifiable boundary on the one hand, we note that there are well-used crossings at Sharsted Way and Fairview Avenue.

140 Our final recommendations are based on the proposals put forward by the Labour & Co-operatives. At the previous round of consultation, some respondents specifically requested that we extend the boundary of the existing Hempstead & Wigmore ward to Woodside in order to include the entire Wigmore community in a single ward. Our final recommendations do this.

141 Our final recommendations include a two-councillor Hempstead & Wigmore ward, a two-councillor Rainham South West ward and a three-councillor Watling ward. Hempstead & Wigmore and Rainham South West wards are forecast to have 9% and 7% more electors respectively than the borough average by 2026. Watling ward is forecast to have 1% fewer electors than the borough average by 2026. It includes the area of Darland, between Ash Tree Lane, Kingsway, the A278 and the A2 (Watling Street/Sovereign Boulevard). The boundary along the A289 (Ito Way) remains unchanged from our further draft recommendations.

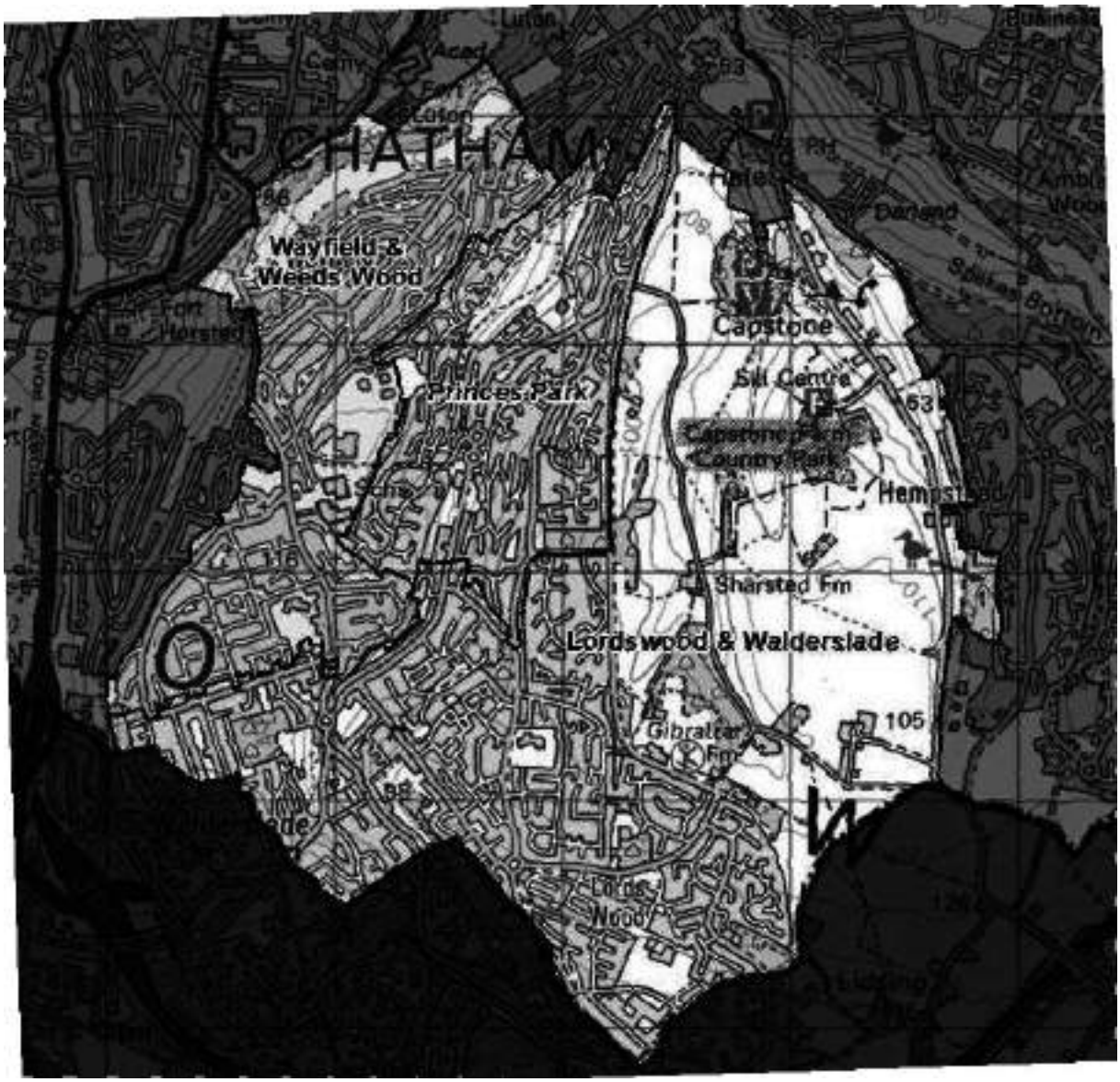
### *Rainham South East*

142 In addition to the area-wide comments, we received one submission which included specific comments on the boundaries of our Rainham South East ward.

143 The Conservatives and Labour & Co-operatives expressed support for this ward. Councillor Hackwell expressed broad support for our further draft recommendations. However, he suggested that 16 properties at the northern end of Mierscourt Road should be included in Rainham South East ward. We note that this would unite all of Mierscourt Road in a single ward. However, it will cut off some residents in Shelden Drive (Nos 6-12 and 17-29) from the rest of their ward (Rainham South West). We therefore did not make any changes to this ward and confirm our further draft recommendations for Rainham South East as final.

144 Rainham South East is a three-councillor ward forecast to have 2% more electors than the average for Medway Council by 2026.

## Lordswood & Walderslade, Princes Park and Wayfield & Weeds Wood




| Ward | Number of councillors | Variance 2026 |
|---|---|---|
| Lordswood & Walderslade | 3 | 7% |
| Princes Park | 2 | -5% |
| Wayfield & Weeds Wood | 2 | 1% |

*Lordswood & Walderslade, Princes Park and Wayfield & Weeds Wood*

145 In addition to the borough-wide comments for these areas, we received submissions from a councillor, local organisation and residents in response to our draft recommendations.

146 The political parties and Councillor Maple expressed broad support for our draft recommendations for this area. The Liberal Democrats specifically acknowledged the affinity between the Wayfield and Weedswood communities and Councillor

Maple stated that the Lordswood & Walderslade and Wayfield & Weedswood pairs ‘are logical and something that the community would recognise and support’.

147 The Vicar of St Philip & St James’ Church suggested moving the boundary of Wayfield & Weedswood south to include ‘Chestnut Avenue and the associated roads to the south’ for geographical reasons, noting that this would coincide with the Church of England parish boundary approach. However, we note that this would add more than 750 electors to Wayfield & Weedswood producing a variance of 12%. We do not consider that we have received enough community evidence to support the creation of a ward with such a variance in this part of the borough.

148 Residents were broadly in support of these wards. One resident pointed to the Lordswood & Walderslade Community Group on Facebook as evidence of a shared community.

149 A resident suggested that we include Scotby Avenue and ‘more of Princes Avenue’ in Lordswood & Walderslade ward stating that these ‘houses and community developed together with the houses to the south’. The resident did not provide persuasive evidence to support this. However, we have looked at the boundary again and noted that our draft recommendations did not take into account access for residents of Peacock Rise, off Princes Avenue. We have therefore modified the boundary in this area. Although we do not include residents of Scotby Avenue in Lordswood & Walderslade, we include the area of Princes Avenue as suggested by the resident.

150 We have made one more modification to our draft recommendations in this area – to include electors in 443-465 Lords Wood Lane in Princes Park ward, uniting them in a single ward with their closest neighbours.

151 Our final recommendations for Lordswood & Walderslade and Princes Park wards are based on our draft recommendations with two modifications as described above. Lordswood & Walderslade ward is a three-councillor ward forecast to have 7% more electors than the average for Medway Council by 2026. Princes Park is a two-councillor ward forecast to have 5% fewer electors than the borough average, by 2026.

152 As part of our draft recommendations we asked for views on whether Weedswood should be spelt as one word or two separate ones. Both the Labour & Co-operatives and the Vicar of St Philip & St James’ Church state both spellings are used. Labour & Co-operatives state a preference for it to be spelt as two words and we are content to name it accordingly.

153 The two-councillor Wayfield & Weeds Wood ward is forecast to have 1% more electors than the borough average by 2026.

# Conclusions

154 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality in Medway, referencing the 2019 and 2026 electorate figures against the proposed number of councillors and wards. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found at Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided at Appendix B.

## Summary of electoral arrangements

| | Final recommendations | |
|---|---|---|
| | 2019 | 2026 |
| Number of councillors | 59 | 59 |
| Number of electoral wards | 24 | 24 |
| Average number of electors per councillor | 3,394 | 3,725 |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average | 7 | 2 |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average | 0 | 0 |

### Final recommendations

Medway Council should be made up of 59 councillors serving wards representing three single-councillor wards, seven two-councillor wards and 14 three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

### Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Medway Council.
You can also view our final recommendations for Medway on our interactive maps at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

## What happens next?

155 We have now completed our review of Medway Council. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2023.

## Equalities

156 The Commission has looked at how it carries out reviews under the guidelines set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It has made best endeavours to ensure that people with protected characteristics can participate in the review process and is sufficiently satisfied that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.

# Appendices

## Appendix A

### Final recommendations for Medway Council

| | Ward name | Number of councillors | Electorate (2019) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % | Electorate (2026) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | All Saints | 1 | 3,592 | 3,592 | 6% | 3,977 | 3,977 | 7% |
| 2 | Chatham Central & Brompton | 3 | 9,999 | 3,333 | -2% | 11,190 | 3,730 | 0% |
| 3 | Cuxton, Halling & Riverside | 2 | 5,865 | 2,933 | -14% | 6,581 | 3,291 | -12% |
| 4 | Fort Horsted | 1 | 3,426 | 3,426 | 1% | 3,653 | 3,653 | -2% |
| 5 | Fort Pitt | 3 | 9,509 | 3,170 | -7% | 10,271 | 3,424 | -8% |
| 6 | Gillingham North | 3 | 9,642 | 3,214 | -5% | 11,207 | 3,736 | 0% |
| 7 | Gillingham South | 3 | 11,076 | 3,692 | 9% | 11,913 | 3,971 | 7% |
| 8 | Hempstead & Wigmore | 2 | 7,628 | 3,814 | 12% | 8,156 | 4,078 | 9% |
| 9 | Hoo St Werburgh & High Halstow | 3 | 9,108 | 3,036 | -11% | 11,324 | 3,775 | 1% |
| 10 | Lordswood & Walderslade | 3 | 11,342 | 3,781 | 11% | 11,924 | 3,985 | 7% |

| | Ward name | Number of councillors | Electorate (2019) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % | Electorate (2026) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11 | Luton | 2 | 6,834 | 3,417 | 1% | 7,441 | 3,721 | 0% |
| 12 | Princes Park | 2 | 6,807 | 3,404 | 0% | 7,085 | 3,542 | -5% |
| 13 | Rainham North | 3 | 10,401 | 3,467 | 2% | 11,731 | 3,910 | 5% |
| 14 | Rainham South East | 3 | 10,678 | 3,559 | 5% | 11,376 | 3,792 | 2% |
| 15 | Rainham South West | 2 | 7,592 | 3,796 | 12% | 8,001 | 4,001 | 7% |
| 16 | Rochester East & Warren Wood | 3 | 9,567 | 3,189 | -6% | 10,223 | 3,408 | -9% |
| 17 | Rochester West & Borstal | 3 | 8,341 | 2,780 | -18% | 10,001 | 3,334 | -11% |
| 18 | St Mary’s Island | 1 | 2,729 | 2,729 | -20% | 3,657 | 3,657 | -2% |
| 19 | Strood North & Frindsbury | 3 | 10,695 | 3,565 | 5% | 11,299 | 3,766 | 1% |
| 20 | Strood Rural | 3 | 10,251 | 3,417 | 1% | 11,268 | 3,756 | 1% |
| 21 | Strood West | 3 | 10,202 | 3,401 | 0% | 11,040 | 3,680 | -1% |
| 22 | Twydall | 2 | 7,479 | 3,740 | 10% | 7,846 | 3,923 | 5% |
| 23 | Watling | 3 | 10,481 | 3,494 | 3% | 11,040 | 3,680 | -1% |

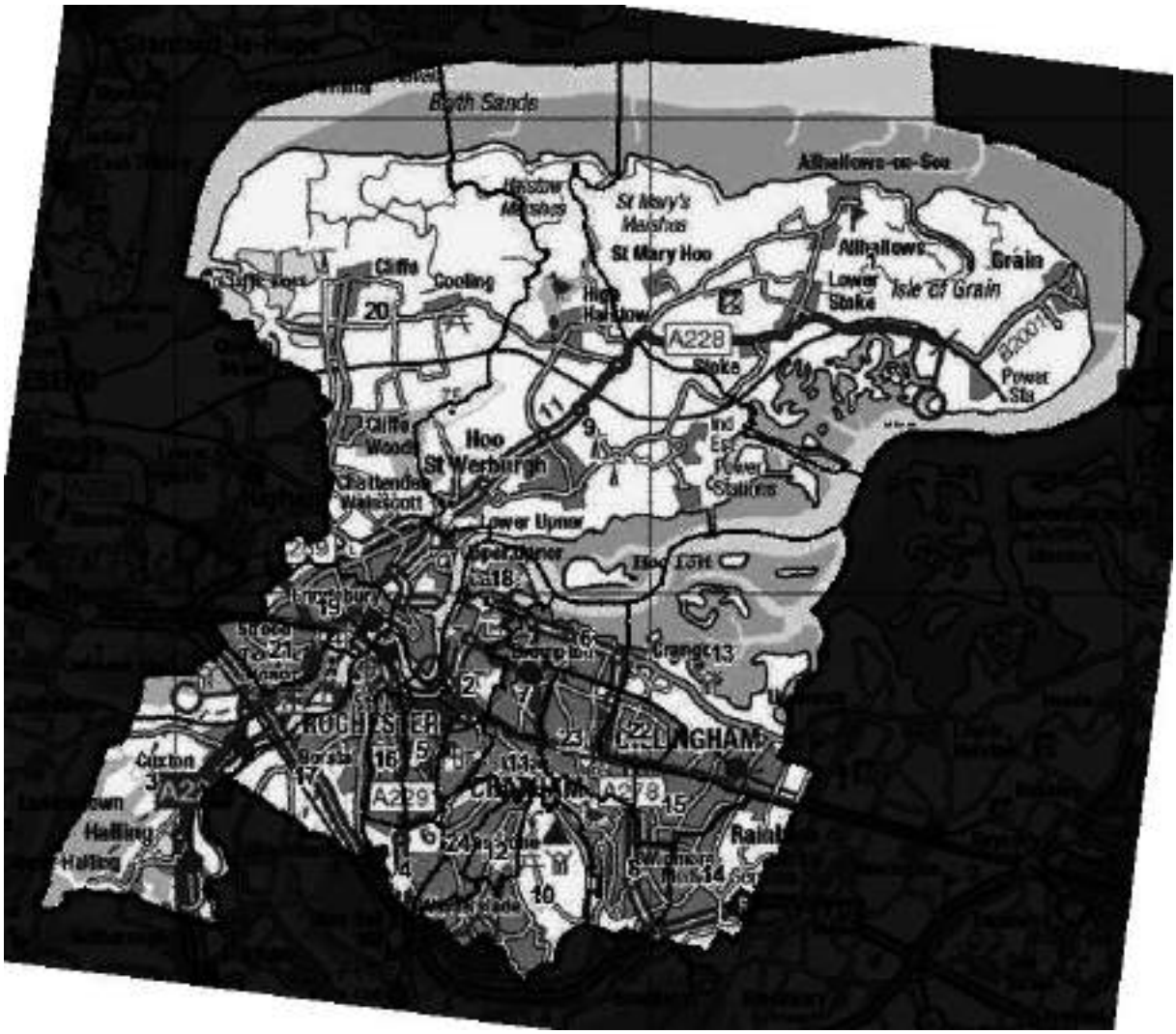
| | Ward name | Number of councillors | Electorate (2019) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % | Electorate (2026) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 24 | Wayfield & Weeds Wood | 2 | 7,024 | 3,512 | 3% | 7,551 | 3,776 | 1% |
| | **Totals** | **59** | **200,268** | **–** | **–** | **219,785** | **–** | **–** |
| | **Averages** | **–** | **–** | **3,394** | **–** | **–** | **3,725** | **–** |

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Medway Council.

Note: The ‘variance from average’ column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

# Appendix B

## Outline map




| Number | Ward name |
|---|---|
| 1 | All Saints |
| 2 | Chatham Central & Brompton |
| 3 | Cuxton, Halling & Riverside |
| 4 | Fort Horsted |
| 5 | Fort Pitt |
| 6 | Gillingham North |
| 7 | Gillingham South |
| 8 | Hempstead & Wigmore |
| 9 | Hoo St Werburgh & High Halstow |
| 10 | Lordswood & Walderslade |
| 11 | Luton |
| 12 | Princes Park |
| 13 | Rainham North |

| | |
|---|---|
| 14 | Rainham South East |
| 15 | Rainham South West |
| 16 | Rochester East & Warren Wood |
| 17 | Rochester West & Borstal |
| 18 | St Mary's Island |
| 19 | Strood North & Frindsbury |
| 20 | Strood Rural |
| 21 | Strood West |
| 22 | Twydall |
| 23 | Watling |
| 24 | Wayfield & Weeds Wood |

A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/kent/medway

# Appendix C

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:
www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/kent/medway

## Submissions received in response to our draft recommendations

### *Political Groups*

- Medway Conservatives
- Medway Independents
- Medway Labour & Co-operative Group, Medway Constituency Labour Parties and Medway Co-operative Party
- Medway Liberal Democrats

### *Councillors*

- Councillor N. Ahmed (Medway Council)
- Councillor N. Ahmed, Councillor J. Aldous & Councillor B. Kemp (Medway Council)
- Councillor N. Bowler (Medway Council)
- Councillor H. Browne (Medway Council)
- Councillor C. Buckwell (Halling Parish Council & Medway Council)
- Councillor K. Carr (Medway Council)
- Councillor K. Carr & Councillor M. Potter (Medway Council)
- Councillor G. Chalker (Halling Parish Council)
- Councillor S. Chamberlain (Halling Parish Council)
- Councillor D. Chambers & Councillor R. Chambers (Medway Council)
- Councillor P. Cooper (Medway Council)
- Councillor T. Dolby (Halling Parish Council)
- Councillor G. Hackwell (Medway Council)
- Councillor S. Hubbard (Medway Council)
- Councillor N. Khan (Medway Council)
- Councillor V. Maple (Medway Council)
- Councillor T. Murray (Medway Council)
- Councillor A. Price (Medway Council
- Councillor A. Stamp (Medway Council)
- Councillor C. Stamp (Medway Council)
- Councillor H. Tejan (Medway Council
- Councillor P. Thompson (Medway Council)
- Councillor R. Thorne (Medway Council)
- Councillor S. Tranter (Medway Council)
- Councillor R. Turpin (Medway Council)

### *Members of Parliament*

- Rehman Chisti MP
- Tracey Crouch MP
- Kelly Tolhurst MP

### *Local Organisations*

- Chatham Maritime Trust
- City of Rochester Society
- Hempstead Residents' Association
- St Philip & St James' Church

### *Parish and Town Councils*

- Cuxton Parish Council
- Hoo St Werburgh Parish Council

### *Local Residents*

- 287 local residents

## Submissions received in response to our further draft recommendations

### *Political Groups*

- Medway Conservatives
- Medway Labour & Co-operative Group, Medway Constituency Labour Parties and Medway Co-operative Party
- Medway Liberal Democrats

### *Councillors*

- Councillor N. Ahmed, Councillor J. Aldous & Councillor B. Kemp (Medway Council)
- Councillor J. Aldous (Medway Council)
- Councillor H. Browne (Medway Council)
- Councillor K. Carr & Councillor M. Potter (Medway Council)
- Councillor M. Fearn (Medway Council)
- Councillor G. Hackwell (Medway Council)
- Councillor A. Jarrett (Medway Council)
- Councillor C. Johnson (Medway Council

- Councillor J. Lloyd (Medway Council)
- Councillor V. Maple (Medway Council)
- Councillor M. Prenter (Medway Council)
- Councillor C. Stamp (Medway Council)

*Members of Parliament*

- Rehman Chishti MP
- Tracey Crouch MP

*Local Organisations*

- Ability Plus
- Strum & Bass

*Local Residents*

- 114 local residents

# Appendix D

## Glossary and abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| Council size | The number of councillors elected to serve on a council |
| Electoral Change Order (or Order) | A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority |
| Division | A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council |
| Electoral fairness | When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's |
| Electoral inequality | Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority |
| Electorate | People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections |
| Number of electors per councillor | The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors |
| Over-represented | Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average |
| Parish | A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents |

| | |
|---|---|
| Parish council | A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council' |
| Parish (or town) council electoral arrangements | The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward |
| Parish ward | A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council |
| Town council | A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk |
| Under-represented | Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average |
| Variance (or electoral variance) | How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average |
| Ward | A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council |

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was set up by Parliament, independent of Government and political parties. It is directly accountable to Parliament through a committee chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. It is responsible for conducting boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government.

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